

Message Text

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47

ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07

IO-13 COME-00 AGRE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03

INT-05 CG-00 DLOS-06 SAL-01 /061 W

----- 061005

O R 091525Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8247

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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FROM USDEL ICNAF FOR OES/OFA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ICNAF, EFIS, CA, NO, XN

SUBJECT: HARP AND HOODED SEAL QUOTAS FOR 1977

1. SUMMARY: PANEL A RECOMMENDED ADOPTION OF CONSERVATION MEASURES, TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES (TAC'S), AND COUNTRY ALLOCATIONS FOR HARP AND HOOD SEALS FOR 1977. U.S. PARTICIPATED AS AN OBSERVER, URGING THAT MANAGEMENT OF THE HARP AND HOOD SEAL RESOURCES SHOULD BE BASED ON BROADER CRITERIA OF AESTHETIC, SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL, AND RECREATIONAL VALUES, NOT SOLELY FOR ECONOMIC UTILITY. PANEL MEMBERS STATED TO U.S. OBSERVER THAT THEY HAD ALWAYS TAKEN ACCOUNT OF OTHER THAN ECONOMIC ISSUES. MAJOR RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR HARP SEALS LED TO INCREASED TAC FOR 1977, WITH CANADIAN ALLOCATION SHARPLY INCREASED FOR 1977, AND NORWEGIAN ALLOCATION REDUCED. HOOD SEAL PROGRAM SIMILAR TO 1976, WITH ALLOCATIONS SPLIT BETWEEN NORWAY AND CANADA. END SUMMARY.

2. DUE TO U.S. MARINE MAMMAL INTERESTS, AND PANEL A RECOMMENDED INCREASE IN TAC OF HARP SEALS, PLUS NEED FOR CAUTIOUS APPROACH TO HOOD SEAL MANAGEMENT IN
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ABSENCE OF COMPREHENSIVE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE, U.S.,

AS OBSERVER, MADE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IN PANEL A:

QUOTE: THE UNITED STATES, AS WE HAVE IN PAST YEARS, URGES THAT THIS PANEL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE BROADER CRITERIA OF AESTHETIC, SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL, AND RECREATIONAL VALUES OF THE HARP AND HOOD SEAL RESOURCE, AND NOT SIMPLY BASE THE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS ON ECONOMIC UTILITY. UNQUOTE. MEMBERS OF PANEL A INDICATED IN RESPONSE THAT THE PANEL HAD ALWAYS TAKEN ACCOUNT OF OTHER THAN ECONOMIC ISSUES. THE DELEGATE OF CANADA INDICATED THAT CURRENT MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS WOULD PERMIT AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBERS OF EACH SPECIES. DESPITE THESE ASSURANCES, IN VIEW OF THE SENSITIVITY TO SEALING BY GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES, THE ICNAF DEL PLANS TO INTRODUCE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IN PLENARY: QUOTE: THE UNITED STATES IS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED WITH PANEL A RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN INCREASED TAC FOR HARP SEALS IN 1977 AND, IN THE ABSENCE OF A DETAILED, COMPREHENSIVE SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT FOR HOOD SEALS, WITH THE CONTINUATION OF THE PREVIOUS TAC LEVEL FOR HOOD SEALS. WE URGE A CAUTIOUS, CONSERVATIVE APPROACH TO THE MANAGEMENT OF THESE UNIQUE RESOURCES.

3. QUOTE: AS THE COMMISSION MOVES TO ADOPT SPECIFIC SEAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS FOR 1977, THE UNITED STATES REQUESTS THAT THE COMMISSION CONTINUE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE BROADER CRITERIA OF AESTHETIC, SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL, AND RECREATIONAL VALUES OF THE HARP AND HOOD SEAL RESOURCE, AND THAT THESE PROGRAMS NOT BE BASED SOLELY ON ECONOMIC UTILITY. END OF QUOTE.

4. HARP SEALS: THE 1977 TAC FOR HARP SEALS RECOMMENDED BY PANEL A IS 170,100 ANIMALS. THIS IS LARGER THAN 1976 (127,100 TAC) BY 42,900 ANIMALS AND LARGER THAN 1975 (150,000 TAC) BY 20,000 ANIMALS. CONSIDERABLE SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF THE HARP SEALS, REPORTED BY THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISERS TO PANEL A, INDICATES THAT THE CURRENT HARP SEAL POPULATION CAN BE MAINTAINED WITH A TAC OF 200,000 ANIMALS. HENCE, A TAC OF 170,000 SHOULD ALLOW SOME REBUILDING OF THE POPULATION DURING 1977
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5. FYI: THE DELEGATE FROM CANADA NOTED PRIVATELY THAT CURRENT TAC'S WILL ALLOW REBUILDING OF THE HARP SEAL POPULATION. HOW LONG CANADA WILL ALLOW THIS REBUILDING TO CONTINUE WILL DEPEND UPON MANAGEMENT DECISIONS TAKEN AFTER MORE KNOWLEDGE OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SEALS AND FISH STOCKS IS GAINED. IF, FOR EXAMPLE, SEALS EAT SUBSTANTIAL

QUANTITIES OF FISH OF INTEREST TO CANADA, THE
DECISION MAY BE TAKEN TO INCREASE THE SEAL HARVEST TO
REDUCE FISH MORTALITY. END FYI.

6. THE 1977 HARP SEAL ALLOCATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:
CANADA 125,000; NORWAY 35,000; OTHERS 100. THE
ALLOCATIONS FOR 1976 WERE: CANADA 52,333; NORWAY
44,667; OTHERS 100.

7. CANADA, AS A COASTAL STATE, HAS A SUBSTANTIAL
INCREASE IN TAC FOR 1977, NORWAY A SUBSTANTIAL
REDUCTION. NORWAY HAS REQUESTED THAT CANADA RETURN
ANY UNUSED TAC TO BE ALLOCATED TO NORWAY DURING THE YEAR.

8. THE PANEL AGREED THAT THE PROHIBITION ON KILLING
OF ADULT HARP SEALS IN WHELPING PATCHES SHOULD BE CONTINUED.

9. AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD CONTROLLING THE HUNTING
OF OLDER SEALS, THE PANEL AGREED TO LIMIT THE TAKE OF
SEALS OVER ONE YEAR OLD BY LARGE VESSELS TO FIVE PERCENT
OF LARGE VESSELS CATCHES IN 1977. OPENING AND CLOSING
DATES, AND DAILY HUNTING TIMES WERE AS AGREED AT THE
OCTOBER SPECIAL MEETING IN COPENHAGEN.

10. HOOD SEALS: PANEL A RECOMMENDES A HOOD SEAL
TAC OF 15,100 ANIMALS, THE NUMBER IN EFFECT SINCE
1974. THE INTENSIVE SCIENTIFIC WORK DONE ON HARP
SEALS HAS NOT BEEN DONE FOR HOOD SEALS, BUT MEMBER
COUNTRIES OF PANEL A PLAN TO BEGIN THESE PROGRAMS
IN 1977. THE ALLOCATIONS, UNTIL MARCH 29, 1977, ARE:
CANADA 6,000; NORWAY 6,000; OTHERS 100. AFTER
MARCH 29, 1977, THE REMAINING 3,000 ANIMALS WILL BE
TAKEN ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED BASIS BY FISHER-
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MEN OF CANADA AND NORWAY. THE 1976 ALLOCATIONS WERE:
CANADA 6,000; NORWAY 9,000; OTHERS 100.

11. THE PANEL AGREED THAT A LIMIT OF TEN PERCENT
OF EACH COUNTRY'S CATCHES WOULD BE PLACED ON BREEDING
FEMALES. ALSO, THE PROHIBITION OF THE KILLING OF
WHELPING HOOD SEALS IN DAVIS STRAIT BY VESSELS
OVER FIFTY GROSS TONS SHOULD BE CONTINUED. OPENING
AND CLOSING DATES, AND DAILY HUNTING TIMES WERE AS
AGREED AT THE OCTOBER SPECIAL MEETING.

12. GENERAL. THE PANEL WILL HOLD ITS NEXT MEETING
AT THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE COMMISSION, ALTHOUGH IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO
HAVE A FURTHER PANEL A MEETING IN AUTUMN 1977.

THE PANEL ALSO AGREED THAT FOR DECISIONS TAKEN AND
AGREED BY THE COMMISSION, WHICH WOULD NOT NORMALLY
COME INTO EFFECT FOR SIX MONTHS, THE PANEL WOULD
ADOPT A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR VOLUNTARY ADHERENCE
TO THE DECISIONS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1977. STABLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FISHING INDUSTRY, CONSERVATION, SPECIES PROTECTION, POLICIES, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MADRID09291
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760455-0284
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761259/aaaabyjl.tel
Line Count: 174
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <04 AUG 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HARP AND HOODED SEAL QUOTAS FOR 1977
TAGS: EFIS, CA, NO, XN, ICNAF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006